

February 5, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of legislation supporting the degree of Radiology Assistant in Connecticut. As a large university academic radiologist, I see the full breadth of radiology. I was trained in an era of increasing health care cost and decreasing insurance reimbursements, however, as the population ages, there is greater health care utilization. We are expected to do more, with less. Our own practice started employing mid-level practitioners approximately six and a half years ago, with clear benefit. However, the pool of candidates qualified to fulfill the ever expanding need remains small. Five APRNs and PAs have held this role, and each required extensive, time-consuming direct training from those in an already busy practice. This was performed without complaint or issue, because the future benefit was clearly recognized.

Radiology Assistants provide a clear answer to a pressing question, "How can we provide cost effective, quality care, in a time of forever increasing service demands?" The training specific to the Radiology Assistant is unique in several ways. First, as Radiologic Technologists, they are intimately acquainted with the wide range of radiologic procedures. Second, the Radiology Assistants' role as a physician care extender adds to the well recognized, underserved profession of radiology, in a non-restrictive fashion. The comprehensive training prepares the students in a variety of tasks, through didactic, as well as empiric, hands-on approach. While not trained in interpretation, they can perform many of the less complicated procedures, freeing the radiologist to provide greater patient care, and ultimately increase productivity. Third, the curriculum is already structured to train the students as physician care extenders, but more specifically, radiology extenders, requiring that they work under the supervision of a licensed radiologist, a demand which is unique to the mid-level practitioner role.

In summary, the Radiology Assistant licensure is one whose time has come. I have taken on the responsibility and task of instructor in one of the newest training programs because it is a program in which I greatly believe. Whether it be in a university based, academic program, or a general, private practice, introduction of the Radiology Assistant is a major step in solving the problem of "trying to provide more with less."

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Reiner
Instructor, Radiology Assistant Program
Quinnipiac University
Hamden, CT 06518
Assistant Professor, Diagnostic Radiology
Assistant Fellowship Director,
Section of Interventional Radiology
Yale University
New Haven, CT 06520

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